

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Committee: SOCIAL SERVICES

Date: AUGUST 24, 2007

Committee Members Present:	Others Present:
Supervisors	Robert Phelps, Commissioner of Department of
Tessier	Social Services (DSS)
O'Connor	Michael Jabaut, Director, Administrative Services,
Sheehan	DSS
Bentley	Kathy Baker, Fiscal Manager, DSS
Kenny	William Thomas, Chairman
F. Thomas	Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative &
Mason	Fiscal Services
	Joan Sady, Clerk, Board of Supervisors
	Supervisor Belden
	Nicole Livingston, Deputy Clerk

Mr. Tessier called the meeting of the Social Services Committee to order at 10:34 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. O'Connor and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Robert Phelps, Commissioner of DSS, distributed Agendas and the proposed 2008 Budget packets to the Committee members, copies of which are on file with the minutes.

Commencing the Agenda review with Item 1, Mr. Phelps requested to extend an existing contract with the Warren/Washington Homeless Youth Coalition for PINS (Person in Need of Supervision)/JD (Juvenile Delinquent) Respite services for a term commencing July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008, for a total amount not to exceed \$22,000. He noted there was a \$40,000 allocation of the 100% State funding to cover the cost of this contract, as well as the next request. He added the second request was for a new contract with the Youth Advocate Program to provide after-hour, weekend and holiday on-call Crisis Response Services, for a total amount not to exceed \$18,000.

Motion was made by Mr. Mason, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously to authorize the extension of the existing contract with the Warren/Washington Homeless Youth Coalition for PINS (Person in Need of Supervision)/JD (Juvenile Delinquent) Respite services for a term commencing July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008, for a total amount not to exceed \$22,000. The necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting and a copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.

Motion was made by Mr. F. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to authorize the agreement with the Youth Advocate Program to provide after-hour,

weekend and holiday on-call Crisis Response Services, for a term commencing July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008, for a total amount not to exceed \$18,000. The necessary resolution was authorized for the next board meeting and a copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Belden entered the meeting at 10:38 a.m.

Mr. Phelps recognized DSS staff that were in attendance at the meeting today, Kathy Baker, Fiscal Manager; Doug Herschleb, Director of Social Services and Michael Jabaut, Director of Administrative Services. He praised their leadership and support for the Department and the staff. He added that his Department did a tremendous job in providing services to the community. He reminded the Committee members of the two annual reports for 2006 that were published this year which highlighted the accomplishments of the Department.

Mr. Phelps referred to the proposed 2008 Budget included in the Agenda packet. He noted the 2008 Budget for the Administration Division (A.6010) reflected a request of \$8,100,538 as compared to the 2007 appropriation of \$8,043,170, an increase of \$57,368.

Continuing, Mr. Phelps advised the proposed 2008 Budget for the Countryside Adult Home (A.6030) was under review and required approval of the Westmount Health Facility Committee. He further stated that approval from the Social Services Committee would be contingent upon approval of the aforementioned Committee.

Mr. Phelps directed the Committees attention to the Public Facility for Children Division (A.6050) and noted the proposed 2008 Budget request was \$200,000 as compared to the 2007 appropriation of \$214,879, a decrease of \$14,879. He said that they had seen an improvement in avoidance of detention placements. Mr. Phelps advised the proposed 2008 Budget for the Day Care Block Grant (A.6055.4) reflected a request of \$1,647,882 as compared to the 2007 appropriation of \$1,588,000, an increase of \$59,882. He added that the Day Care Block Grant (A.6055.4) was 100% reimbursable and further stated that it was comprised of federal funds and the allocation was provided by the State. He referred to the 2008 proposed Budget for the Purchase of Services for Recipients (A.6070.4) and noted that this code provided for a number of contracts with area agencies. He said the 2008 Budget (A.6070.4) reflected a request of \$480,000 as compared to the 2007 appropriation of \$312,475, an increase of \$167,525.

Mr. Phelps expounded the program expenditure area was comprised of the following: Medicaid (MMIS) (A.6100) which reflected a 2008 Budget request of \$10,963,622 as compared to the 2007 appropriation of \$10,711,864, an increase of \$251,758. He explained that this was the Medicaid cap of 3% on the base year and this was 100% local dollars. He noted the Medical Assistance (A.6101) were payments made outside of the MMIS system and reflected a 2008 request of \$320,000 as compared to the

2007 appropriation of \$300,000, an increase of \$20,000. Mr. Phelps added that these expenditures were now 100% reimbursable due to the Medicaid cap, as were all administrative costs associated with the Medicaid Program.

Mr. Phelps apprised that two-thirds of TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) (A.6109.4) was foster care expenditures and was 75% reimbursable. He further noted that only one-third of TANF was public assistance now. He added that Foster Care (A.6119.4) expenditures had increased and he did anticipate a shortfall this year, which was partially related to increased rates.

Mr. Phelps advised the overall proposed 2008 Budget for Social Services, excluding the Countryside Adult Home, reflected a request of \$29,724,431 as compared to the 2007 appropriation of \$29,387,728, an increase of \$336,703. He further stated that with the inclusion of the Countryside Adult Home, there was a 1.18% appropriation increase. He said the cost to the County (local share) reflected approximately a 5% increase.

Discussion ensued with regard to reimbursement from the State. Mr. Phelps expounded the Budget Worksheet Report reflected the projected revenues on pages 1 through 8.

Mr. Phelps referred to the personnel changes he was requesting for the 2008 proposed Budget. He stated there were eight personnel changes he would be requesting this year, four of which were requested and carried over from last year. He reminded the Committee that Resolution No. 283 of 2007 authorized the reclassification of six Account Clerk positions, and two were deferred because they were recently hired individuals and had not completed their probationary period at that time. He clarified he was requesting to reclassify two Account Clerk positions to Senior Account Clerk positions, increasing the salaries from the 2007 base salary of \$23,645 to the proposed 2008 base salary of \$27,085, an increase of \$3,440 for each position.

Mr. Phelps advised he was requesting a salary increase for the Fiscal Manager from the 2007 base salary of \$44,748 to the proposed 2008 base salary of \$47,380, an increase of \$2,632. He noted that this was in order to provide a salary comparable to that of the Fiscal Manager in Public Health.

Mr. Phelps requested to reclassify the position of the Senior Social Welfare Examiner in the Long-Term Care Medicaid Program to a Principal Social Welfare Examiner and added he had requested this reclassification last year. He advised there was a pending Out-of-Title Pay Grievance. He added the other request was for a new Caseworker position in the Coordinated Care Unit to provide home care services for Medicaid recipients.

Mr. Phelps apprised within the Child Protective Services (CPS) Unit, he was requesting a new Caseworker position, as well as two new Casework Assistant positions at lower grade levels, which would address the extremely high caseload that the Caseworkers were facing.

Mr. Herschleb provided a memorandum, included in the Agenda packets, which addressed the unmanageable workloads within the Child Protective Services Unit. Mr. Herschleb reviewed his concerns with the Committee members.

Mr. Kenny questioned the total number of staff currently in the CPS Unit and Mr. Phelps replied there were eight Caseworkers, a Senior Caseworker and a Grade B Supervisor.

Mr. Caimano commented that the 2008 proposed Budget was five percent higher than what the Committee would like to see; however, he said, he did feel that the five percent was justified because the DSS had no control over the workloads that came into their Department. He further noted that Mr. Phelps had requested an overall increase of \$15,710 for salaries and suggested that he look at other areas within the Department that could be scaled back in order to cover those salary increases.

Mr. Mason agreed with Mr. Caimano and recommended that Mr. Phelps look at adjusting some other codes in order to be able to increase the salaries as requested. Mr. Phelps added he had received notice yesterday that a new allocation totaling \$54,000 would be received; however, he said, that was not included in the proposed Budget due to time constraints, and that allocation would generate additional revenue in the amount of approximately \$14,000.

Mr. O'Connor asked if any members of the Committee were against hiring additional employees in the DSS and the Committee was unanimously in favor of additional employees being included in the DSS staff.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Bentley and carried unanimously to approve the Social Services Budget as presented, authorize the Committee chairman to sign it, and refer the same to the Budget officer.

Mr. Payne gave the Committee members an update on the condition of the DSS building. Mr. Phelps added more issues had arisen regarding health related problems reported by DSS staff members. He noted one employee was experiencing difficulties in breathing and was taken to the Glens Falls Hospital yesterday by ambulance; however, he said, he could not confirm that it was directly related to the conditions in the building. Mr. Phelps advised additional air quality tests were being performed today. He said that there were a number of staff that continued to have allergy/breathing related problems, whether it was the building contributing to that or the environment, he said he was not sure.

Mr. Payne apprised that some of the staff at the DSS had been contacting the press. He added that the New York State Department of Health had contacted him as well and they would be doing a walk-through of the building. Mr. Tessier said there should be only one spokesperson for this issue.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion made by Mr. Mason and seconded by Mr. Sheehan, Mr. Tessier adjourned the meeting at 11:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole Livingston, Deputy Clerk